**New Insurance Schemes for Farmers**

3888. DR. T. SUBBARAMI REDDY:
SHRIMATI JAMANA DEVI BARUPAL:

Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether in a bid to provide greater insurance coverage to farmers in the event of failure of their crops, Government have decided to come out with new scheme in place of existing ones;

(b) whether this new scheme will be based on recommendations made recently by the joint group formed by the Centre to review NAIS and suggested measures to improve insurance coverage of farmers;

(c) if so, from which date the scheme is likely to come into force; and

(d) whether this policy has been helpful to the farmers?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI KANTI LAL BHURIA) : (a) to (d) To make the existing Crop Insurance Scheme more attractive to the farmers so as to provide greater coverage, a Joint Group to study the improvements required in the existing Crop Insurance Schemes was set up by the Government.

The Group has made in-depth study of the related issues and submitted its report on 20.12.2004. To improve the Crop Insurance Scheme, the Group has made many important recommendations relating to smaller unit area of insurance; basis of calculation of Threshold Yield, provision of higher indemnity level; coverage of pre-sowing/planting risks and post harvest losses, personal accident insurance cover and package insurance policy etc.

The Government, at present, is in the process of consulting various stakeholders to modify the National Agricultural Insurance Scheme (NAIS) based on the recommendations of the Joint Group.

**Production of Apples**

3889. SHRI LALIT SURI: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is any proposal under, Government's consideration to substantially increase the production of apples in the country;